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A MANUAL OF SPEECH¹

With an entirely commendable distinction Professor Lewis calls his manual a *Handbook of American Speech*. With frankness equally praiseworthy he asserts in his preface that he "does not believe that a book can be written which will wholly take the place of personal instruction." He does think, however, "that it is not impossible for an untrained teacher to teach some of the fundamental facts of correct speech from a simple text."

Considering this modest intention, this treatment may be pronounced adequate. One hundred and thirty-five of the two hundred and forty pages deal simply and informingly with the definite topic of American speech, proceeding systematically from the physiological production of vowel sounds, through combinations, to words; then considering such wider aspects as rate, quality, pitch, inflections, emphasis, poetry and concluding with practical hints for eradicating peculiarities of American dialect speech, both those of the changing foreigner and the unchanging sectionalist, whether nasal New Englander or slurring southerner. Several diagrams, drawings, and photographs illustrate the discussions, and comprehensive sets of exercises enforce the directions. The author's conclusions are sane. He would not eliminate the sound of *r*, but modify it. He offers no elocutionary hard-and-fast rules for emphasis; he chooses a middle manner between sense stress and rhythmical accent in reading poetry. He pleads, together with the Committee on American Speech, that attention be given first of all to tone—that it shall be quiet, pleasant, clear—and to distinctness. "If one does not wish to be thought a fault-finder, a scold, a dolt, or a pig he should not talk like one." Professor Lewis has avoided entirely those eyesores of "speaking books" diacritics to mark emphasis and inflection, using instead explanations based on thought, and in the exercises for tone quality a few scales comprehensible to the least musical pedagogue. But Professor Lewis would never approve of the teacher of speaking who advised his pupils always to radiate cheerfulness by exclaiming "Good morning" in five tones.

Since this book is a pioneer it cannot leave too far behind the accepted practices of the day; so the second part passes from speech to speaking. Of the three chapters here, "Speaking in Public," "Oral Composition,"

¹ *A Handbook of American Speech*. By Calvin L. Lewis. Chicago: Scott Foresman & Co., 1916. Pp. 242.

"Argument," the second is eminently the best. It gives evidence of practical methods successfully followed. To many a bewildered teacher whose normal-school training had so many methods that she has evolved no personal method this chapter will prove a salvation in oral composition, especially as so few teachers ever realize that speaking even merely in conversation is an agreeable art.

The last chapter, "Selections for Practice," has very much the appearance of a reading-book. The reviewer would respectfully submit the suggestion that in order to make a pupil read well, he should be taught that his listeners must understand through hearing alone, and that the printed page should not be before their eyes. However, the inclusion of such selections for reading may be explained by convenience.

There are a few details one would like to see different. On p. 40 *s* is classed as a dental consonant, while on the next page Bell's table lists it as distinct from teeth formations. Some expressions could be better worded, such as "try the following experiment" (p. 92); "words themselves necessarily larger and less familiar" (words longer, or meaning larger? p. 93); "commencement crowd of people" (p. 139). Alfred Noyes, Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson (pp. 129, 143) are mentioned with no titles.

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BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Shakespeare's Theater. By ASHLEY H. THORNDIKE. New York: Macmillan, 1916. Pp. 472. \$2.50.

A comprehensive survey of present information concerning the theater of Shakespeare's time. Illustrated and provided with full bibliographical notes. A work of first importance.

A Manual of the Writings in Middle English—1050-1400. By JOHN EDWIN WELLS. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916. Pp. 941. \$5.00.

Intended as a complete manual of the period. Full accounts are given of the whereabouts of each source and of its character.

The Student's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. By JOHN R. CLARK HALL. Second edition revised and enlarged. New York: Macmillan, 1916. Pp. 372. \$3.50.

Among the new features are the references to illustrations to be found in *The New English Dictionary*.

John Milton: Topical Bibliography. By ELBERT N. S. THOMPSON. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916. Pp. 104. \$1.15.